

" How could one hope that one court-martial would undo what another had done ? . . . Does not the superior idea of discipline, which is in the very blood of those soldiers, suffice to weaken their capacity for equity? "Whoever says discipline says obedience. When the Minister of War, the supreme chief, had publicly established, amid the acclamations of the National Representatives [the Chamber of Deputies] the authority of a decided case [*la chose jugée*], could one expect that a court-martial would give him the lie direct! . . . General Billot had given the judges [of Esterhazy] a hint, and they gave their decision in the same way as they might go into battle, that is, without arguing. The preconceived opinion which they brought to the bench was evidently this :
* Dreyfus was convicted of treason by a court-martial; he is therefore guilty, and we, as a court-martial, cannot declare him innocent; we know that to proclaim the guilt of Esterhazy would be to proclaim the innocence of Dreyfus.' Nothing could move them from this view.

" They have pronounced an iniquitous sentence which will forever weigh on our courts-martial, and cast suspicion on all their decisions. The first court-martial [that on Dreyfus] may have been wanting in intelligence, the second [on Esterhazy] was criminal, perforce. Its excuse, I repeat, is that the supreme chief had spoken, declaring the *chose jugée* to be unassailable, holy, and superior to man, in such wise that subordinates dared not affirm the contrary. People speak of the honour of the army, they wish us to love and respect it. Ah ! certainly, yes, the army which would rise at the first threat, which would defend our French soil, the army which is compounded of the

whole people, for that we
have only affection and respect. But it is
no question of that
army, for the dignity of which we are justly
anxious in our desire
for justice. It is a question of the sword,
the master that may
be given us, perhaps, to-morrow. And to
kiss devoutly the hilt
of the sword, the fetish —no !

" As I have shown, the Dreyfus Affair
was the War Office
Affair. An officer of the Staff, denounced by
his comrades on the